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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 20 April 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Burkina Faso has decided to put forward its candidature for re-election to the Human Rights Council, for the period 2011-2014, in the elections to be held in New York on 20 May 2011.

A member of the Human Rights Council since 2008, Burkina Faso has spared no effort to promote and strengthen human rights at the national, regional and international levels, particularly by ratifying the relevant treaties, conventions and protocols and by developing full cooperation with the Council and its subsidiary organs.

If re-elected, Burkina Faso intends to continue to fulfil its commitments to ensure more effective enjoyment of human rights in the world, in the service of peace and development.

The attached document sets out Burkina Faso's voluntary pledges and commitments with respect to human rights (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Michel **Kafando**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 20 April 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Burkina Faso for a second term on the Human Rights Council, 2011-2014

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

Burkina Faso declares its candidacy for re-election to the Human Rights Council for the period 2011-2014.

Fulfilment of commitments made in 2008

Burkina Faso was elected a member of the Human Rights Council in 2008 with the support of the African Union and many friendly countries, in keeping with the letter and spirit of resolution 60/251 which stipulates that members of the Council shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights and shall fully cooperate with the Council, including its mechanisms and subsidiary organs.

In this regard, Burkina Faso pledged to intensify its efforts, policy and activities to protect and promote human rights at the national, regional and international levels, including by means of the following actions, among others:

- Support for the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto, adopted on 13 December 2006
- Ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted on 20 December 2006
- Intensified efforts to stop trafficking in children and child labour
- Fulfilment of commitments to the campaign to prevent the involvement of children in armed conflict
- Intensified efforts at the national level to combat the practice of female genital mutilation
- Measures to strengthen the policy for protecting the rights of specific groups
- Continued efforts to carry out widespread educational initiatives on human rights and fundamental freedoms
- Increased efforts to ensure that perpetrators of human rights violations do not go unpunished

Participation in the Council

A few months after its election as a member of the Council, Burkina Faso underwent the universal periodic review, whereby it assumed commitments and requested the international community's support in implementing a number of activities with a view to the effective enjoyment of certain human rights in Burkina Faso.

Burkina Faso participates actively in all work of the Council, cooperates fully with its mechanisms, including the special procedures, and regularly collaborates with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

At the time of its request for re-election as a member of the Human Rights Council, Burkina Faso has ratified the key conventions and protocols and has also taken specific steps towards the fulfilment of other commitments.

Commitments undertaken for the second term

Convinced that the capacity of the Human Rights Council to fulfil its mandate of promoting and protecting fundamental rights in all countries depends on the strong commitment of its members to support these rights, Burkina Faso undertakes to carry out the following activities during its second term:

- Cooperate fully with the mechanisms of the Council, including the special procedures, by responding swiftly and substantively to their messages
- Pursue vigorously the fulfilment of commitments undertaken in order for human rights to take root in Burkina Faso and for peacebuilding efforts worldwide
- Ensure that the commitments assumed under the universal periodic review to address human rights issues are comprehensively met
- Take effective action against human rights abuses, including blatant and systematic human rights violations and urgent violations of fundamental rights

Achieving these aims and successfully implementing these different activities will require international cooperation and solidarity. Burkina Faso therefore requests support from all Member States.

Ongoing activities at the national level

Following the universal periodic review, a programme of action has already been submitted to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights so that the necessary technical assistance and budgetary support may be provided. Burkina Faso also intends to implement programmes which cover such areas as human rights education and training, and the introduction of human rights education in the school system. In order to comply with the Paris Principles, a law has been adopted establishing the National Human Rights Commission.

Furthermore, draft laws are being drawn up for the full implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and for the abolition of the death penalty. In this regard, it should be

recalled that Burkina Faso has ratified the fundamental human rights treaties, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

To provide every opportunity for the recommendations arising from the universal periodic review to be carried out successfully, a national committee of relevant ministerial departments has been set up to monitor the implementation of these recommendations, in addition to the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission.